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Forty-fourth session

Geneva, 9–13 December 2024

Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda

Review of the implementation of the 2024–2025 workplan: compliance

Twenty-seventh report of the Implementation Committee

Submitted by the Implementation Committee

Summary

In accordance with the structure and functions of the Implementation Committee under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, the Committee is required to report at least once a year on its activities to the Executive Body for the Convention.^a

The twenty-seventh report of the Implementation Committee contains information on the Committee's activities in 2024 with regard to compliance by individual Parties to the Protocols to the Convention with their emission reduction and reporting obligations, summarizing the work carried out at the Committee's fifty-first session (Geneva (hybrid), 3–5 September 2024). The report was prepared by the Implementation Committee with the support of the Convention secretariat.

This report also contains a summary of the Committee's work on a draft of its operational rules, as requested by the Executive Body at its forty-third session (Geneva, 11–14 December 2023).^b

^a ECE/EB.AIR/113/Add.1, decision 2012/25, annex, para. 9.

^b ECE/EB.AIR/154, para. 25 (c).

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-second session (Geneva, 12–16 December 2022), the Executive Body for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution elected Denmark (Mr. Christian Lange), France (Mr. Jean-Pierre Chang), North Macedonia (Ms. Aleksandra Nestorovska-Krsteska) and the United States of America (Mr. Jeremy Weinberg) and re-elected Canada (Ms. Catherine Bloodworth) and Estonia (Mr. Marek Maasikmets) for a second term, Croatia (Mr. Josip Kovilić) and Sweden (Ms. Petra Hagström) for a fourth term, and Norway (Ms. Alice Gaustad) for a sixth term as members of the Implementation Committee. It elected Mr. Maasikmets (Estonia) as Chair of the Implementation Committee.¹

2. The fifty-first session of the Implementation Committee (Geneva (hybrid), 3–5 September 2024) was serviced by the Convention secretariat.

II. Compliance with emission reduction obligations

3. The Implementation Committee was unable to review compliance by the Republic of Moldova with its emission reduction obligations owing to non-submission of emission data by the time of the session in 2024.

A. Follow-up on submissions and referrals initiated by the secretariat during the period 2019–2023 that are still under consideration

1. Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants

(a) Follow-up to the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Finland with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ref. 1/19 (PAH))

Background

4. The 2019 submission of emission data received from Finland indicated that there was an exceedance of the base year level for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) by approximately 36 per cent. The base year level of PAH emissions was 7.47 tons, whereas in 2017 emissions reached 10.15 tons. This information seemed to suggest that Finland was in non-compliance with its obligations under article 3 (5) (a) of the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants. In its response to the secretariat's pre-referral letter, Finland submitted information on the sources of emissions, which mainly included residential wood combustion. It clarified that the emission inventory for residential combustion took into account different types of technologies and equipment used and also changes in the use of technologies. The emission factors were based on measurements. Finland also provided information on measures implemented to reduce PAH emissions.

5. The Committee considered the referral at its forty-second session (Stockholm, 7–9 May 2019). It noted the information provided by Finland and requested the secretariat to send a letter requesting the Party to provide:

(a) A list of specific measures Finland intended to take to fulfil its emission reduction obligations under the Protocol;

(b) The quantitative and projected effects of further and more effective measures to reduce its PAH emissions up to and including the year of predicted compliance;

(c) A timetable specifying the year by which it expected to be in compliance.²

6. At its forty-fourth session (Geneva (online), 13–14 May 2020), the Committee noted the response provided by Finland on 28 February 2020, in which the Party indicated the increased use of wood for residential heating as the reason for exceedance and three

¹ ECE/EB.AIR/150, para. 20 (b)–(d).

² ECE/EB.AIR/2019/3, para. 48.

categories of measures included in its National Air Pollution Control Programme. The Committee further noted that quantitative effects of the described measures had not been projected yet and that Finland was unable to specify a timetable for reaching compliance.³

7. The Committee continued to consider the case at its forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions (Geneva (online), 5–6 May 2021 and 14–16 September 2021, respectively).⁴ At the Committee's forty-seventh session, a representative of Finland pointed to increased wood burning and use of sauna stoves as the main reasons for PAH emission exceedance. He noted that Finland would improve its statistics on wood consumption. Ongoing processes and projects were explained in the presentation with regard to the development of the measures contained in the National Air Pollution Control Programme. He informed the Committee that Finland expected to be in compliance in 2022 based on the updated inventory.⁵

8. The Committee continued to consider the case at its fiftieth session (Geneva (online), 5–7 July 2023). It noted that, according to the latest emission data, PAH emissions in 2021 had resulted in an exceedance of 5 per cent. The Committee further noted that emission data showed a continued decrease of PAH emissions in 2021 compared to 2017, 2018 and 2019 and a slight increase compared to 2020. The Committee decided to continue to review the case in 2024.⁶

Deliberations

9. The Committee considered the case at its fifty-first session. It noted that, according to the 2024 submission, emissions of PAH in Finland in 2022 were at approximately 18.5 tons compared to emissions of 19.2 tons in the 1994 base year, which was below the base year level by approximately 4 per cent. The Committee further noted that reported PAH emissions in 2022 were thus in compliance with the obligation under article 3 (5) (a) of the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants. The Committee concluded that there was no reason to continue reviewing the case.

(b) Follow-up to the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Montenegro with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ref. 5/23 (HCB))

Background

10. The 2023 submission of emission data for hexachlorobenzene (HCB) received from Montenegro indicated that it had not met its 2021 reduction commitment under the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants: in 1990 – the base year for Montenegro – emissions of HCB were 0.112 kg, whereas in 2021 they reached 0.126 kg, which resulted in an exceedance of the base year emission level for HCB by approximately 13 per cent in 2021. This seemed to suggest that Montenegro was not in compliance with its obligation under article 3 (5) (a) of the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants. The secretariat informed Montenegro of its intention to refer the issue to the Implementation Committee and of the referral of the case to the Implementation Committee.

11. The Committee considered the case at its fiftieth session. It noted that Montenegro had not provided any information related to the apparent non-compliance in response to the letter by the secretariat. It decided to continue reviewing the case in 2024, and requested the secretariat to send a letter to Montenegro inviting it to take part in the Committee's fifty-first session and requesting it to provide information on:

(a) The specific measures Montenegro intended to take to fulfil its emission reduction obligations under the Protocol;

(b) The quantitative and projected effects of further and more effective measures to reduce its HCB emissions up to and including the year of predicted compliance;

³ ECE/EB.AIR/2020/2, para. 50.

⁴ ECE/EB.AIR/2021/3, para. 34.

⁵ *ibid.*, para. 35.

⁶ ECE/EB.AIR/2023/3, paras. 29–30.

(c) A timetable specifying the year by which Montenegro expected to be in compliance.⁷

12. In its response submitted on 23 October 2023 via email, Montenegro explained the delay in the provision of the requested information and asked the Committee for support in the matter. Montenegro explained that, due to a lack of staff and expertise, its inventories had been compiled with international assistance in the past. It further explained that the key category for HCB emissions (77.5 per cent) was public electricity and heat production – provided by a single thermopower plant (Pljevlja thermopower plant). It noted a difference in calculation when comparing the inventory reports of 2020 and 2021 with the inventory report of 2022 as the basis for its non-compliance: the difference in emissions between 1990 and 2019 amounted to minus 16 per cent based on its Informative Inventory Reports for 2020 and 2021. In the Informative Inventory Report for 2022, the key category of emissions (72.2 per cent) remained public electricity and heat production (Pljevlja thermopower plant), but in this report the difference of emissions for the period between 1990 and 2020 was 22 per cent. Montenegro further noted that, in the observed period between 2018 and 2020, as well as throughout its life cycle, energy production from Pljevlja thermopower plant was steady and, according to the energy balance of Montenegro, in the range of 1,543.7 GWh (2018) 1,463.3 GWh (2019) to 1,567.0 GWh (2020). Montenegro also noted that, even though repeatedly requested from national experts and Environment Agency Austria, an explanation of the calculations that led to an increase of HCB emissions had not been provided in the Informative Inventory Report of 2022.

13. In response to the specific requests of the Committee, Montenegro stated that:

(a) One specific measure was the ongoing reconstruction of Pljevlja thermopower plant (installation of abatement equipment [desulfurization, denitrification and removal of particulate matter (PM) particles]) as the key emission source for HCB, which should be completed by the end of 2024;

(b) It needed assistance to assess the projected effects of the activity described under (a), as well as an assessment of the calculation of HCB emissions; and

(c) Without a consolidation of the emissions inventory, there was no possibility to provide a reliable timetable of compliance.

14. In an email dated 28 August 2024, Montenegro stated that it would not be able to participate in the Committee's fifty-first session but reiterated that real emissions had not increased, rather the calculation methods had been changed and were not properly explained in the Informative Inventory Report for 2022. Since the inventory compilation was outsourced by Montenegro, it was waiting for an official explanation for the data presented in the last Informative Inventory Report.

Deliberations

15. The Committee considered the case at its fifty-first session and thanked Montenegro for the information provided in response to the secretariat's letter. It noted that emissions of HCB in Montenegro were at approximately 0.144 kg in 2022 compared to emissions of 0.134 kg in the base year of 1990, which was above the base year level by approximately 8 per cent. The Committee noted the reasoning provided by Montenegro and the country's intention to inform the Committee of any new developments, including the results of Montenegrin outreach efforts. It welcomed the planned measures to reduce emissions. The Committee decided to continue reviewing the case in 2025 and invited Montenegro to participate in the next session for which the case was scheduled.

⁷ *ibid.*, paras. 58–59.

2. **Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (the Gothenburg Protocol), as amended in 2012**
- (a) **Follow-up to the submission by Norway concerning its compliance with the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012 (ref. 5/22 (VOCs, NH₃))**

Background

16. The secretariat received a letter from Norway dated 8 July 2022 concerning its compliance with the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (the Gothenburg Protocol), as amended in 2012, with respect to volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and ammonia (NH₃) emissions. The latest submission of emission data received from Norway indicated that it had not met its 2020 reduction commitments for VOCs and NH₃: the indicated reduction commitment for VOCs was 40 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 249.3 kilotons, while the reported emissions in 2020 amounted to 152.9 kilotons, which was above the reduction commitment by approximately 1.3 per cent. The indicated reduction commitment for NH₃ was 8 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 30.5 kilotons, while the reported emissions in 2020 amounted to 28.6 kilotons, which was above the reduction commitment by approximately 2 per cent.

17. In the report on VOCs enclosed in its letter, Norway pointed to the downward trend in emissions in general and to the production of sanitizers during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic as the reason for exceedance. In its report on NH₃ emissions, Norway provided information on sources, trends, improvements of the emission inventory, projections and policy measures (current and planned) to meet its obligations under the Protocol.

18. The Committee considered the case at its forty-ninth session (Geneva (online), 30–31 August 2022). A representative of Norway participating in the session pointed to the use of sanitizers during the COVID-19 pandemic as the reason for exceedance of emissions of VOCs, and noted that emissions were expected to be reduced as soon as the pandemic ended. As for NH₃ emissions, the representative of Norway noted the need for additional policy measures to meet the country's emission reduction commitments.

19. The Committee appreciated the information provided and looked forward to receiving a timetable specifying the year by which Norway expected to be in compliance with the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012. The Committee decided to continue to review the case at its sessions in 2024.⁸

Deliberations

20. The Committee considered the case at its fifty-first session. It noted that emissions of VOCs in Norway amounted to 143.3 kilotons in 2022, which corresponded to a reduction of approximately 41 per cent compared to the indicated emission reduction commitment of 40 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 243 kilotons. The Committee further noted that reported VOC emissions in 2022 were thus in compliance with the obligation under article 3 (1) of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012. It concluded that there was no reason to continue reviewing the case with regard to VOCs.

21. Regarding NH₃, the Committee noted that emissions in Norway amounted to 29.5 kilotons in 2022, which corresponded to a reduction of approximately 7 per cent compared to the indicated reduction commitment of 8 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 31.6 kilotons. It further noted that reported emissions in 2022 did not meet the 2020 reduction commitment and that no timetable specifying the year by which Norway expected to be in compliance had been received. The Committee decided to continue to consider the case regarding NH₃ in 2025 and requested the secretariat to send a letter to Norway asking for:

- (a) Information on the measures Norway intended to take to fulfil its emission reduction obligations;

⁸ ECE/EB.AIR/2022/2, paras. 34–38.

(b) A timetable specifying the year by which Norway expected to be in compliance.

(b) Follow-up to the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance of Lithuania with the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012 (ref. 2/22 (NO_x))

Background

22. The 2022 submission of emission data for nitrogen oxides (NO_x) received from Lithuania indicated that it had not met its 2020 reduction commitment under the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012: the agreed reduction commitment was 48 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 56.83 gigagrams (Gg), while the reported emissions in 2020 amounted to 44.24 Gg, which corresponded to a 22 per cent reduction only. This information seemed to suggest that Lithuania was not in compliance with its obligation under article 3 (1) of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012.

23. The secretariat informed Lithuania of its intention to refer the issue to the Implementation Committee and of the referral of the case to the Implementation Committee. Lithuania responded, providing information on its measures to reach compliance under the Protocol with respect to NO_x emissions.

24. The Committee considered the case at its forty-ninth session. It noted that reported NO_x emissions in 2020 were not in compliance with the obligation under article 3 (1) of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012. It noted that Lithuania had responded to the letter by the secretariat. Taking into account the response, the amended National Air Pollution Control Programme to be approved by Lithuania, and the emission projections Lithuania was expected to provide in 2023, the Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2024.⁹

Deliberations

25. The Committee considered the case at its fifty-first session. It noted that the agreed reduction commitment was 48 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 56.47 Gg, while the reported emissions for the year 2022 were 40.40 Gg, which corresponded to a reduction of 28 per cent. It also noted that reported NO_x emissions in 2022 were not in compliance with the obligation under article 3 (1) of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012. The Committee further noted that national total NO_x emissions in 2022 were reduced compared to 2021 and 2020.

26. The Committee decided to continue to consider the case regarding NO_x in 2025, reminding the Party that its cases of exceedances of NMVOC and NH₃ emissions and non-compliance with its reduction commitments under the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012, which were also scheduled for 2025.¹⁰

27. The Committee requested the secretariat to send a letter to Lithuania inviting it to participate in the next session for which the case was scheduled and asking the country to provide information on:

(a) The status of measures described in the letter of 21 July 2022 and potential additional measures to bring Lithuania into compliance with its NO_x emission reduction obligations;

(b) A revised timetable specifying the year by which Lithuania is expected to be in compliance in accordance with the obligation under article 3 (1) of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012.

⁹ *ibid.*, para. 41.

¹⁰ ECE/EB.AIR/2023/3, para. 55.

(c) **Follow-up to the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Cyprus with the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012 (ref. 2/23 (SO_x))**

Background

28. The 2023 submission of emission data for sulfur oxides (SO_x) received from Cyprus indicated that it had not met its 2021 reduction commitment under the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012: the agreed reduction commitment was 83 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 37.8 kilotons, while the reported emissions in 2021 amounted to 9.9 kilotons, which corresponded to a 74 per cent reduction only. This suggested that Cyprus was not in compliance with its obligation under article 3 (1) of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012.

29. In its response to the secretariat, Cyprus noted that, in Cyprus, 85 per cent of SO_x were emitted by the energy sector in 2021. Cyprus specified the measures already taken to reduce emissions of SO_x in the public electricity and heat production sector, including its attempts to supply natural gas, which had in part been slowed down by the pandemic. Cyprus further noted that the most significant sources of sulfur emissions in 2021 were public power (87 per cent) and industry (13 per cent), with Dhekelia power plant being the most dominant source running on hydrofluoroolefins (HFOs) with a sulfur content of 1 per cent and having no desulfurization unit. It also noted that units 1–6 (steam turbines) of Dhekelia power station, largely contributing to the overall SO_x emissions of Cyprus and technically not responsive to abatement measures, would cease operation in 2023 following the European Union Industrial Emissions Directive.¹¹ Cyprus also reported on progress in renewable energy in the period 2019–2021. The secretariat informed the Party of the referral of the case to the Implementation Committee.

30. The Committee considered the case at its fiftieth session. A representative of Cyprus participated in the session and provided information about the measures that Cyprus was considering for implementation. The Committee noted that Cyprus had not met its 2021 reduction commitment of 83 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 37.8 kilotons under the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012. It also noted that the Party had not provided projections of emissions or an indication of an expected timeline for compliance.

31. The Committee decided to review the case in 2024 and requested the secretariat to send a letter to Cyprus requesting it to provide additional information on:

- (a) The specific measures Cyprus intended to take to fulfil its emission reduction obligations under the Protocol;
- (b) The quantitative and projected effects of further and more effective measures to reduce its emissions of SO_x up to and including the year of predicted compliance;
- (c) A timetable specifying the year by which Cyprus expects to be in compliance.

32. In its response, Cyprus reiterated that energy industries were the main source for SO_x emissions in Cyprus. In 2021, those contributed to the national SO_x emissions by 85 per cent, whereas 82.2 per cent of these emissions came from Dhekelia power station. As for measures taken to reduce SO_x emissions, Cyprus explained that a project on introducing natural gas as an alternative source for power generation had been delayed and was expected to be completed around the end of 2023, whereas the use of natural gas would then be phased in in 2024 and completion was expected around the end of 2026. Cyprus further added that the operation of units 1–6 (steam turbines) of Dhekelia power station could not be stopped, as this would jeopardize the electricity supply of Nicosia, amongst other reasons, and that said units were expected to cease operations in 2029. It further pointed to the expected completion of the EuroAsia Interconnector – a European Union Project of Common Interest of a 1,000 MV undersea cable connecting the electricity grids of Cyprus and Greece – by the end of 2026, which would allow for the shutdown of units 1–6 of Dhekelia power station. Additionally, measures regarding renewable energy sources had been taken. Cyprus

¹¹ See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2010/75/oj>.

informed the Committee that the reduction commitment for SO_x under the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended 2012, would be achieved in 2029.

Deliberations

33. The Committee considered the case at its fifty-first session. It noted that, according to the 2024 submission, emissions of SO_x amounted to 11.2 kilotons in 2022, which suggested a reduction of approximately 70 per cent compared to the agreed reduction commitment of 83 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 37.8 kilotons. It also noted that Cyprus had thus not met its reduction commitment according to article (3) (1) of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012, and that the reported emissions in 2022 were 4 per centage points higher than in 2021 compared to the base year. The Committee also noted that the Party had not provided detailed projections of emissions and the effect of the described measures – in particular introduction of natural gas, the EuroAsia Interconnector and measures regarding renewable energy. It further noted that the Party's submission did not include any information on the use of low sulfur fuels as a possible measure.

34. The Committee decided to review the case in 2025 and requested the secretariat to send a letter to Cyprus reiterating the request to provide additional information on:

(a) The specific measures Cyprus intends to take to fulfil its emission reduction obligations under the Protocol;

(b) The quantitative and projected effects of further and more effective measures to reduce its emissions of SO_x up to and including the year of predicted compliance.

B. New submissions and referrals initiated in 2024

35. The secretariat informed the Implementation Committee that, out of 25 new cases of exceedance of emission reduction commitment levels by Parties in 2022,¹² none had been addressed by the secretariat.¹³ The related cases of potential non-compliance could therefore not be referred to and reviewed by the Committee. Out of the 25 new cases, 1 concerned the 1994 Protocol on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions, 5 concerned the Gothenburg Protocol (NO_x – 2 cases; non-methane volatile organic compound (NMVOC) – 1 case; NH₃ – 2 cases), 6 concerned the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (PAH – 1 case; polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) – 3 cases; HCB – 2 cases) and 13 concerned the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended 2012 (NO_x – 1 case; NMVOC – 2 cases; NH₃ – 8 cases; PM_{2.5} – 2 cases).

36. The secretariat further informed the Committee that the above-mentioned number further includes cases under the Gothenburg Protocol in which a Party has ratified the original and amended Protocol but does not have a 2010 emission ceiling in annex II to the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012. The Committee noted that decision 2019/2 on review of compliance by Parties to the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (ECE/EB.AIR/144/Add.1) does not cover these cases, but that the proposed “Revised procedures for the Implementation Committee” would resolve the issue.

III. Compliance with reporting obligations

37. In line with item 3.1 of the 2024–2025 workplan for the implementation of the Convention,¹⁴ the Committee evaluated compliance by Parties with their emission data reporting obligations on the basis of information provided by the Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections and further synthesized by the secretariat, and responses by Parties. The information on reporting compiled by the Centre on Emission Inventories and

¹² For detailed information see ECE/EB.AIR/2024/INF.4, available at <https://unece.org/info/events/event/386758>.

¹³ See ECE/EB.AIR/154, para. 46 (d).

¹⁴ ECE/EB.AIR/154/Add.1, table 3.

Projections is presented as an informal document for the forty-fourth session of the Executive Body and covers data reported until 30 July 2024.¹⁵

A. Follow-up to Executive Body decisions

Follow-up to decision 2013/19 concerning compliance by the Republic of Moldova with its obligation to report gridded emission data

38. In decision 2013/19, paragraph 4 (c) (ECE/EB.AIR/122/Add.1), the Executive Body urged the Republic of Moldova to provide its missing gridded data for 2005 and 2010 under the Protocols on Persistent Organic Pollutants and Heavy Metals. The secretariat informed the Committee that, as of 30 July 2024, the Republic of Moldova had not provided its missing gridded data under either Protocol.

39. In 2023, the Committee had suggested that the Republic of Moldova might face a systemic barrier to reaching compliance with its reporting obligations and decided to draw that to the attention of the Executive Body.¹⁶ At its fifty-first session, the Committee took note of the information provided by the Republic of Moldova in 2024, from which it took it that the issue was under investigation. The Committee noted that it looked forward to receiving further information on the matter and invited the Republic of Moldova to participate in the next session of the Committee for which the case is scheduled in 2025.

B. Referrals concerning reporting of emission data

1. Referrals initiated in 2015–2023 still under consideration

40. At its thirty-sixth (Geneva, 26–28 January 2016), thirty-seventh (Geneva, 13–15 September 2016), thirty-ninth (Geneva, 5–7 September 2017), forty-first (Geneva, 11–14 September 2018), forty-third (Geneva, 10–12 September 2019), forty-fifth (Geneva, 15–17 September 2020), forty-seventh, forty-ninth, fiftieth and fifty-first sessions, the Committee considered referrals submitted by the secretariat in the period 2015–2023.

Liechtenstein

41. The Committee continued to consider the referrals by the secretariat concerning compliance by Liechtenstein with its obligations to report its gridded data under the 1994 Protocol on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions, the Protocol concerning the Control of Emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds or their Transboundary Fluxes, the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Protocol on Heavy Metals (R10/17, R16/17, R22/17, R34/17, R2/21). The Party had not provided its missing data for 2015 and 2019. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2025. It further requested the secretariat to contact Liechtenstein asking the country to provide the missing gridded data for 2015 and 2019 when providing the gridded data for 2023, or to explain why the data is still missing.

Montenegro

42. The Committee continued to consider the referrals by the secretariat concerning compliance by Montenegro with its reporting obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (gridded data) (R23/17, R35/17, R6/21). The Party had not provided its missing data for 2015 and 2019. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2025. It further requested the secretariat to contact Montenegro asking the country to provide the missing gridded data for 2015 and 2019 when providing the gridded data for 2023, or to explain why the data is still missing.

North Macedonia

43. The Committee continued to consider the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by North Macedonia with its reporting obligations under the Gothenburg

¹⁵ ECE/EB.AIR/2024/INF.4, available at <https://unece.org/info/events/event/386758>.

¹⁶ ECE/EB.AIR/2023/3, para. 62.

Protocol (R12/15, R4/23) regarding missing projections for 2025 and 2030 for all pollutants. The Party had not provided its missing data. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2025. It further took note of the information provided by North Macedonia on when the missing projections could be provided.

Republic of Moldova

44. The Committee continued to consider the referrals by the secretariat concerning compliance by the Republic of Moldova with its obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants to report gridded data for 2015 and 2019 (R25/17, R37/17, R7/21) and to report its annual data for 2021 (R1/23). The Party had not provided its missing data for 2015, 2019 and 2021. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2025. In 2023, the Committee had suggested that the Republic of Moldova might face a systemic barrier to reaching compliance with its reporting obligations and decided to draw this to the attention of the Executive Body. At its fifty-first session, the Committee took note of the information provided by the Republic of Moldova in 2024, from which it took it that the issue was under investigation. The Committee noted that it looked forward to receiving further information on the matter and invited the Republic of Moldova to participate in the next session of the Committee for which the case is scheduled in 2025.

Romania

45. The Committee continued to consider the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Romania with its obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals, the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Gothenburg Protocol to report gridded data (R8/21). The Party had not provided its missing data for 2019. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2025. It further requested the secretariat to contact Romania asking the country to provide the missing gridded data for 2019 when providing the gridded data for 2023, or to explain why the data is still missing.

Serbia

46. The Committee continued to consider the referrals by the secretariat concerning compliance by Serbia with its obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants to report gridded data (R27/17, R39/17, R9/21). The Party had not provided its missing data for 2015 and 2019. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2025. It further asked the secretariat to contact Serbia asking the country to provide the missing gridded data for 2015 and 2019 when providing the gridded data for 2023, or to explain why the data is still missing.

2. Referrals initiated in 2024 under the Protocols to the Convention

47. At its fifty-first session, the Committee considered the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by the Republic of Moldova with its obligation under the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants to report its 2022 annual data (R1/24). The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2025. It further took note of the information provided by the Republic of Moldova in 2024, from which it took it that the issue was under investigation. The Committee noted that it looked forward to receiving further information on the matter and invited the Republic of Moldova to participate in the session of the Committee for which the case is scheduled in 2025.

48. The Committee further noted that, in 2024, only one non-reporting case was referred to the Committee by the secretariat and welcomed the overall improvement in compliance with reporting obligations.

IV. Draft operational rules and note on improving the efficiency of case referrals

49. At its forty-third session (Geneva, 11–14 December 2023), the Executive Body postponed the consideration and potential adoption of the proposed “Revised procedures for the Implementation Committee” until the Executive Body’s forty-fourth session (Geneva, 9–

12 December 2024).¹⁷ In the meantime, it requested the Implementation Committee to draft, in consultation with the secretariat, operational rules for the Implementation Committee for presentation at the forty-fourth session.¹⁸ A draft of these operational rules, as prepared by the Committee with support from the secretariat, was reviewed by the ad hoc group of legal experts in May 2024. The secretariat implemented the results of this review in an updated version of the operational rules. The Committee took note of the review and discussed the updated version of the operational rules. It decided to submit the draft operational rules as discussed and amended during the session to the Executive Body. The Committee also discussed its feedback to the Executive Body Bureau's note to improve the efficiency of case referrals and asked its Chair to report the results to the Executive Body Bureau at its next meeting (Geneva (hybrid), 9 September 2024).

V. Next session

50. The Committee preliminarily decided to hold its next session in the last week of August 2025. It further noted the usefulness of an additional session in the spring of 2025.

¹⁷ ECE/EB.AIR/154, para. 25 (b) and (f).

¹⁸ *ibid.*, para. 25 (c).